

# News Release



U.S. Department of Labor  
Office of Public Affairs  
Washington, D.C.  
Release Number 06-568-PHI

For Immediate Release  
Date: March 28, 2006  
Contact: Dirk Fillpot      Amy Louviere  
Phone: (202) 693-4676      (202) 693-9423

## **MSHA, NIOSH to Hold April 18 Workshop on Mine Escape Planning *Federal Agencies Working With West Virginia for April 20-21 Event on Mine Safety Technology***

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), will host a day-long workshop on mine escape planning and emergency shelters Tuesday, April 18 in Washington, D.C. Working in conjunction with the West Virginia Office of Governor Joe Manchin, MSHA and NIOSH will also be among the cosponsors of a symposium on Mine Safety Technology April 20-21 in Wheeling, W.Va.

“Helping miners safely evacuate mines during an emergency is a priority for MSHA,” said David G. Dye, acting administrator for MSHA. “The first priority for any coal miner in an emergency should be to evacuate the mine, and we want to ensure the most effective procedures are in place to help them evacuate safely. We appreciate the experts who have provided support for this event. We are also pleased to co-sponsor the international symposium on April 20-21 and are appreciative of the efforts of Governor Manchin and West Virginia officials to highlight mine safety technology.”

MSHA has worked very closely with the Office of Gov. Joe Manchin and West Virginia to help seek out promising technologies to improve mine safety following tragic mining accidents in the state this year.

The workshop will discuss mine escape planning, including a recent history of mine escapes, warning systems and the use of self-rescue devices and lifelines. Discussion on emergency shelters will include the history of the use of emergency shelters, how mine design has changed since the 1980s, shelter placement in the mine, configuration and construction, life support instrumentation, communication, training and other issues.

The workshop will allow for an exchange of information among all segments of the mining community involved with emergency preparedness in mining and provide an agenda for technological research to improve mine safety.

The workshop will be held Tuesday, April 18 from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the National Academy of Sciences Auditorium, 2101 Constitution Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. Interested parties can register at the workshop or pre-register by contacting Yvonne Quinn with MSHA at (202) 693-9440, Donna Opfer with NIOSH at (412) 386-6564, or John Sporrer with NIOSH at (412) 386-6435.

The Washington workshop will be followed by a mine safety conference of international and national experts in Wheeling, W.Va.. On April 20-21, MSHA and NIOSH will join the Office of Gov. Joe Manchin and the state of West Virginia in co-sponsoring the International Mining Health and Safety Symposium at Wheeling Jesuit University. The two-day symposium will focus on different, yet critically important, topics including mine safety and emergency best practices, the approval of mine equipment, international practices and rules changes and, most especially, how to accelerate the adoption of emerging state-of-the-art mine safety technologies, both from traditional sources and through technologies developed for other applications by federal agencies such as the Department of Defense, Department of Energy and National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

People interested in attending the International Mining Health and Safety Symposium can register by calling the Robert C. Byrd National Technology Transfer Center at (800) 678-6882.      ###

U.S. Labor Department (DOL) releases are accessible on the Internet at [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov). The information in this news release will be made available in alternate format upon request (large print, Braille, audio tape or disc) from the COAST office. Please specify which news release when placing your request. Call (202) 693-7765 or TTY (202) 693-7755.